

CRC proposes Motorcycle Mentorship Program for Army

Walt Beckman
United States Army Combat Readiness Center

The U. S. Army Combat Readiness Center (CRC), following the lead of the Air Force, has developed a proposed Motorcycle Mentorship Program for the Army. The CRC plans to staff this program at the Army level during the fourth quarter of FY05.

Annual motorcycle fatalities have doubled in the past five years. Motorcycle mishaps resulted in 94 fatalities from FY 99 – FY 04 (FY 04 = 22, FY 03 = 24, FY 02 = 20, FY 01 = 9, FY00 = 8 and FY 99 = 11). Already in FY05 the Army has experienced 67 motorcycle and ATV accidents, resulting in 26 fatalities. The data collected revealed that more than 50 percent of the fatalities were the result of single-vehicle crashes that involved riders exercising poor risk decisions and judgment. The Army's major "at risk" population are males between the ages of 18 and 25 years which comprise 60 percent of the motorcycle fatalities over the last two years.

The challenge for the Army is to proactively engage commanders and young leaders in our effort to curb the growing number of motorcycle fatalities, while providing a positive learning environment for young, less-experienced motorcycle riders. Every Soldier in the Army is critical for readiness and mission success. On the job, we exercise good composite risk management in performing difficult and dangerous tasks. We take care to train new operators in the safest practices of our profession and we pass on the benefits of our experience and correct mistakes to help our Soldiers succeed. We must use this process for our off-duty activities. This is where Soldiers deserve and need leaders' concern and attention.

What better way to ensure a young, inexperienced motorcycle rider starts out on the right foot than providing them a mentor who is an experienced, trained and seasoned veteran of the open road? Someone who can show them what "right" looks like. This is the basis of the Motorcycle Mentorship Program.

Motorcycles are a very popular way for our Soldiers to enjoy the areas surrounding our installations. However, motorcycles

are extremely unforgiving when it comes to an accident. Our Soldiers don't want to die in a motorcycle mishap and the Army may be able to influence this, as the Air Force has, through a Motorcycle Mentorship Program. If we are successful, our



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Combat Readiness Center officials believe that mentors will help new riders gain essential safety skills and keep Soldiers off the statistical list of POV/motorcycle injuries and fatalities.

Soldiers will reduce the number of motorcycle fatalities through learned safe riding behavior.

The Motorcycle Mentorship Program is based on formation of motorcycle clubs that will allow our veteran riders to pass on their knowledge, training, life experiences and learned safety skills to a new generation of motorcycle riders. The clubs will provide an outlet for our Soldiers to get out and safely enjoy the experience of being a motorcycle owner and in the process teach them how to do it the right way. What better way to make a Soldier feel like a member of the team than to take an active interest in his or her well-being.

Motorcycle mentors will have the opportunity to get to know their Soldiers and hone their leadership, teaching, and coaching skills by making them better noncommissioned, warrant and commissioned officers in the process. By providing young riders a positive role model who enjoys the same activity they do, mentors will help the Army to reduce motorcycle fatalities. Soldiers want and deserve our best the Motorcycle Mentorship Program is a way for us to provide them that.

For more information on the program, contact Walt Beckman at (334) 255-9377, DSN 558-9377, or by e-mail at walter.beckman@safetycenter.army.mil.